



## State of Tennessee

### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 511

By Representative Coley

and

Senators Ford, Marrero, Kyle, Kelsey

A RESOLUTION to honor A. Schwab, the oldest and only remaining original business on historic Beale Street in Memphis.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should recognize those estimable businesses that have persevered and prospered over the years and remain vibrant entities in serving their respective communities today, while also remaining true to the spirit and merchandise of the traditional Southern general store; and

WHEREAS, A. Schwab, established in 1876 by Abraham Joseph Schwab, is one such business that is still operated by the Schwab family some 135 years later; and

WHEREAS, presently operated by cousins, Elliot Schwab, Sam Braslow, and Marvin Braslow, A. Schwab is the oldest and only remaining original business on historic Beale Street in Memphis; the A. Schwab property is the only one on Beale Street not owned by the City of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, A. Schwab survived the dark days of urban renewal in the 1960's to become part of the renovated Beale Street Historic District in the fall of 1983, at which time the store began selling souvenirs in addition to its vast volume of sundry items; and

WHEREAS, a dry goods emporium that harkens back to the golden days of the general store, A. Schwab gives the public notice of the incredible variety and randomness encompassed in its 30,000 items of merchandise through its motto: "If you can't find it at A. Schwab, you're probably better off without it!"; and

WHEREAS, over the years, A. Schwab has become much more than a dry goods store; it is truly a Memphis landmark that sells a great selection of everything you need and many items no one needs, including forty-four types of suspenders, a huge variety of Elvis souvenirs, bongo drums, crystal balls, shoeshine kits, nickel candy, 99-cent neckties, corncob pipes, long thermal underwear, cotton petticoats, praying hands, plastic back scratchers, fake samurai swords, suits of armor, cowboy hats, cast-iron cookware, and a large selection of mojo and voodoo curios, although these latter items are sold "without any claims or pretense of any natural or super-natural powers, affects or revelations"; and

WHEREAS, a trip to A. Schwab is literally like travelling backwards in time, as the store remains mostly unchanged since it opened in 1876; and

WHEREAS, A. Schwab at 163 Beale Street is truly a Memphis institution that attracts average citizens and celebrities alike; Elvis Presley once trod the creaking hardwood floors of A. Schwab to buy underwear; B.B. King bought handkerchiefs; and Bono spent two hours chatting with co-owner, Mr. Abe; and

WHEREAS, in addition to selling everything from plumbing supplies to religious paraphernalia in its nearly 20,000 square feet of retail space, A. Schwab houses the Beale Street Museum, a collection of Beale Street memorabilia and many historic items and records of the Schwab family; and

WHEREAS, for 135 years, A. Schwab has anchored Beale Street as a quality purveyor of both jewels and junk, and it should be specially recognized for the unique place it holds in the collective consciousness of the Memphis community; now, therefore,

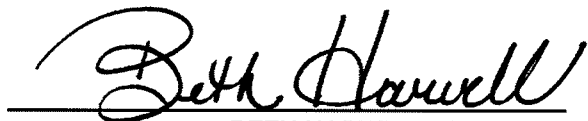
## **HJR 511**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor A. Schwab, the oldest and only remaining original business on historic Beale Street in Memphis, thank the Schwab family for the unique blend and large volume of merchandise they have sold to Memphians and tourists alike over the past 135 years, and wish the store's owners and employees all the best in their future endeavors.

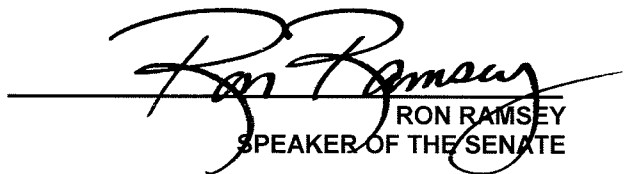
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 511

ADOPTED: MAY 21, 2011



BETH HARWELL, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



RON RAMSEY  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

APPROVED this 21<sup>st</sup> day of May 2011

  
BILL HASLAM, GOVERNOR